THE ALPHA TEXT OF THE GREEK ESTHER

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Two Greek versions of Esther are extant, the Septuagint and a very different form, the Alpha Text (AT). The AT is close to the LXX in some passages, sharply different in others, sometimes presenting a version of the Esther Story distinct from both the LXX and the MT. The purpose of this article is to solidify the case for two theses about the nature and history of the AT: First, the AT is composed of two interwoven levels: an original text, the "proto-AT," and a redactional level, which consists of passages transferred, with modifications, from the LXX. Second, the proto-AT is a translation of a Hebrew text quite different from the MT. Both these theses have been advocated by other scholars, but the case can be strengthened by new lines of argumentation.

These theories are worthy of further argumentation because, as David Clines has shown, if they are correct, we have a non-Massoretic variant of the Esther story that can be used in tracing the history of the earliest Esther traditions. It is, to be sure, a rather audacious move to reconstruct the prehistory of the MT with the help of a text preserved only in medieval Greek MSS. But if it can indeed be established that the original AT is a translation of a Hebrew text not derived from the MT, then the existence of a parallel version allows us, by a sort of triangulation, to deduce the content of a version of the story from which MT Esther descended.

1 David J. A. Clines, The Esther Scroll (JSOT Sup 30; Sheffield 1984) passim.

2 There are, however, a few readings common to the OL and the AT but not the MT and the LXX (Carey A. Moore, The Greek Text of Esther [Johns Hopkins Univ. Ph.D. diss.; Baltimore 1965] 107-18). Moore suggests that these are older Greek readings that were also preserved in the "Lucianic Recension" (as he calls it in his dissertation, 1965). But since the AT is not a recension, it is more likely that AT elements had worked their way into the Greek manuscripts used by the OL.
The AT is preserved in four MSS dating to the 10th-13th centuries.\(^3\) It was printed by James Usher\(^4\) alongside the LXX in 1665 in an edition of MS 93. Fritzsche published both versions in 1848\(^5\). Lagarde published a critical edition of the AT in 1871\(^6\), which was incorporated in the Brooke-McLean Cambridge Septuagint and labelled "\(\varepsilon \Sigma \Theta \Pi \) A."\(^7\) Hanhart published another critical edition, with minor differences from Lagarde's, in his Göttingen Septuagint edition,\(^8\) where the AT is set at the bottom of the page and given the siglum \(L\). An appendix to Scholz's commentary\(^9\) offers a very handy synoptic printing of the AT (Lagarde's edition) alongside the MT (in German translation), Josephus (Antiquities), and LXX. Clines\(^10\) includes an original English translation of the AT in its entirety, alongside the Greek text (Lagarde's).

There is severe confusion in the verse numbering of the Greek versions of Esther. The LXX follows MT except in the Additions (abbreviated as "Add") and 9:31, while the AT has its own numbering system, though some editions attempt to apply MT's system to the AT. Because of partial assimilation of the AT numbering to the LXX-MT, the AT system has gaps and is not always sequential.\(^11\) In the following I refer to the AT by its own system, distinguishing it by using lower case roman numerals to identify the chapters (e.g., viii 17), while the MT and the LXX retain their own numbering, in arabic numerals (e.g., 8:17) Note that Hanhart uses LXX-MT numeration for the chapters in the AT, and these numbers are (prior to LXX chap. 9 // AT

\(^3\) MSS 19, 93, 108, 319, and (partially) 392 (Hanhart's numeration) = Brooke-McLean's b', e', b, and y.

\(^4\) James Usher, De Graeca Septuaginta interpretum versione syntagma, etc. (London 1665).

\(^5\) Otto F. Fritzsche, \(\varepsilon \Sigma \Theta \Pi \). Duplicem libri textum ad optimos codices emendavit et cum selecta lectionis varietate editit (Zürich 1849).

\(^6\) Paul de Lagarde, Librorum Veteris Testamenti Canonicorum Pars Prior Graece (Göttingen 1883).

\(^7\) Alan E. Brooke and Norman McLean, Esther, Judith, Tobit. The OT in Greek: Vol. III. Part I (Cambridge 1940).

\(^8\) Robert Hanhart, ed., Esther (Göttingen Septuagint, VIII, 3; Göttingen 1983).

\(^9\) Anton Scholz, Commentar über das Buch "Esther" (Würzburg-Wien 1892).

\(^10\) Above, n. 1.
Viii 41) one number behind the AT numeration (e.g., AT chap. iv = LXX chap. 3). The AT numeration is used in the Brooke-McLean edition.

Views of the nature of the AT

The relation between the AT and the LXX is a puzzle. The AT resembles the LXX, sometimes word for word, but also differs from it significantly, sometimes lacking long passages found in the other version, sometimes adding material or telling events in its own way. Most of the differences are in wording, word order, and short pluses and minuses. The AT is about 29% shorter than the LXX, but since it includes material absent from the LXX, the AT actually lacks more than 29% of the LXX's material. For the quantitative relation between the two texts see Table I. The plot of the AT – the current AT, not the pre-redaction version – is close to that of the LXX for most of the book. There are a few notable differences in the events narrated, particularly in the material corresponding to LXX chap. 9.

Fritzsche described the AT as "eine tiefeingreifende Umarbeitung" of the LXX. He said that the redactor, whom he called the "Verfasser," generally maintained the narrative line, but also made changes where he did not understand the base text or where it did not please him. The redactor also condensed the LXX where it was too expansive, eliminated contradictions, and made various additions. In his commentary, Fritzsche noted AT variants but did not usually offer a rationale for individual differences. Langen, on the other

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11 The numeration at the end of AT ch. ii proceeds...14 16 18 20 21; ch. iii proceeds 1 2 4 5 7 8 9 14 17 18; the middle of chap. iv proceeds...6 8 9 11 10 7 13.... The AT continues sequential numeration of the verses in the Adds.

12 Otto F. Fritzsche, Zusätze zu dem Buche Esther (Kurzgefasstes exegetisches Handbuch zu dem Apokryphen des Alten Testamentes, I; Leipzig 1851).

13 The LXX, we might note, is quite clear and easy to understand throughout, except in Adds B, E, and parts of F, but that is where the fewest changes are made.

14 In fact, AT contains several contradictions lacking in LXX.

15 Joseph Langen, "Die beiden griechischen Texte des Buches Esther," Tübinger Theologische Quartalschrift 42 (1860) 244-272.
hand, argued (rather obscurely) that the AT was an independent translation of Esther which was subsequently changed and glossed in various ways.\footnote{According to V. Ryssel, Zusätze zum Buch Esther, in: Die Apokryphen und Pseudo-pigraphen des ATs, vol. 1 (E. Kautzsch, ed.; Tübingen 1900) 198, this was also the view of Archbishop Usher.}

At the end of the last century, it became the standard view that the AT was the Lucianic recension of LXX-Esther. Lagarde\footnote{Lagarde (above, n. 6) lxxxiv.} had identified MSS 19, 93, and 108 as Lucianic in some other OT books. B. Jacob\footnote{B. Jacob, "Das Buch Esther bei den LXX," ZAW 10 (1890) 258-62.} took this to mean that the text of Esther in those books was Lucianic as well, a view taken over by subsequent scholars\footnote{See Hanhart (above, n. 8) 25.}. Jacob considered this recension to be based on a very poor text which often led Lucian astray. Bickerman\footnote{Elias Bickermann, "Notes on the Greek Book of Esther," PAAJR 20 (1951) 101-133.} (1951:103-108), who rejected the attribution of the AT to Lucian, still argued that it descended from the same translation as the LXX.\footnote{Almost all of Bickerman's arguments for the common origin of the two versions are based on the Additions, which were indeed taken from LXX.} Generally the AT has been treated as a source of Septuagintal textual variants, most of which were rejected, usually implicitly. Paton's text critical apparatus is the most thoroughgoing application of this approach.\footnote{Lewis B. Paton, The Book of Esther (ICC; Edinburgh 1908).}

E. Tov has put forward the theory that the AT is a recension of the LXX that underwent revision towards a Hebrew or Aramaic version differing from the MT\footnote{Emanuel Tov, "The 'Lucianic' Text of the Canonical and Apocryphal Sections of Esther: A Rewritten Biblical Book," Textus 10 (1982) 1-25.} (1982:10). Against this, Clines observed that the evidence for AT dependence on the LXX is restricted to the redactional level, i.e. the Addds and the ending, (comprising, in his view, viii 18-21, 33-38)\footnote{Clines (above, n. 1) chap. 7.}. Moreover, the statistics brought below in section 7 show that the affiliation of the AT to the LXX is not consistent throughout the book: it is very high in the certain passages – not all of them deuterocanonical ones – and very low in most other passages. In any case, it is
hard to see what the motive would have been for adjusting the LXX to the variant Hebrew manuscript. The hypothesized recension added nothing in the way of moral or religious values. (It is, on the other hand, clear what would be achieved in this regard by a redaction that moved the religious deuto-canonical material from the LXX to a Hebrew version.) Nevertheless, the view I will advocate resembles Tov's insofar as it recognizes the presence of a non-Massoretic Hebrew text in the background of the AT.

J.-C. Haelewycz\(^{25}\) (1985) proposed an intricate, five-stage history of the development of the Esther texts: (1) The original Hebrew, which he identifies with the MT. (2) "G III" – the Greek vorlage of the OL – whose editor thoroughly remodelled the Hebrew text and composed Additions A, part 1 (A 1-11 // i 1-10), B, H 1-5, C, D, E, and F. (3) "L"; the original AT. Its redactor (or author) used G III as base text, but reshaped it under the influence of the MT. From G III he borrowed Adds A, part 1, D, and F. He reduced and reworded his Greek Vorlage considerably, but also added a few items, notably Add A, part 2 (i 11-18) and Mordecai's epistle in viii 33-38. The differences between L and MT are to be explained by the liberties taken by the Greek translator. (4) The LXX. Its redactor aligned G III with the Hebrew. He also took elements from L, including Add A, part 2, and borrowed the other supplements of G III, transferring elements of Add H 1-5, in a radically modified form, to Add C. (5) A further redactor transferred Adds B and E and the prayer in C to L, producing the AT in its current form.

Rather than arguing with this reconstruction in detail, I will offer my own as a substitute. The intricacy of Haelewycz's theory and the multiplicity of its postulations weigh against its plausibility from the start. It is especially implausible that various Additions (and parts thereof) were transferred in different directions at different times. And, as I will show, the author of the AT was not working with the MT. Haelewycz's argumentation proceeds exclusively by a "critique littéraire," which is governed by a feel (often unconvincing) for literary coherence, a quality that Haelewycz assumes to be proof for an earlier stage in

literary development. (Yet when he finds greater coherence in a supposedly later stage he considers it "harmonization."\(^{26}\))

I agree with Haelewyck that Adds B, C, and E were copied from the LXX to the AT, but not that Adds A, D, and F were borrowed in the other direction. They are no better ensconced in the AT than in the LXX. (In neither Version are Adds A and F quite in harmony with the rest of the book).\(^{27}\) My own reconstruction is simpler: there was an original AT to which a redactor transferred material from the LXX (all the Septuagintal Additions as well as the book's ending, viii 39-52).

C. C. Torrey\(^{28}\) argued in 1944 that AT ii 1-viii 21 (corresponding generally to MT 1:1-8:8) – including the Septuagintal Adds – was independent of the LXX, translating a different Semitic original.\(^{29}\) His arguments, however, were somewhat impressionistic and had no immediate impact. It was C. A. Moore\(^{30}\) who showed (quite decisively, in the view of most recent scholars) that the AT is not a Lucanian recension of the LXX, indeed, that there was never any good reason to

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\(^{26}\)See, for example, his appeal to the LXX redactor's harmonistic treatment of the two assassination plots on p. 22 (above, n. 25).

\(^{27}\)The LXX, but not the AT, has Mordecai serving in the court from the beginning of the book (A 1), thus rendering superfluous the appointment to the court he receives in A 16. If an LXX redactor had taken Add A from the AT, we would have to suppose that he created that contradiction by unnecessarily adding the phrase "who served in the court of the king" to A 1. The linking of part 1 of Add A to part 2 by the phrase ἐκ τῆς ἡμέρας in AT i 11 is no evidence that the two parts were first combined in AT, for if the LXX were later it would hardly have removed the join.

In one regard Add A is indeed better adjusted to the AT, namely in reporting the eunuchs' plot only once (in i 11-15). But this greater smoothness could just as well be due to redactional omission of 2:21-23 in the AT (thus Tov [above, n. 23] 11f.) or to the original absence of a eunuchs' plot in proto-AT (thus Clines [above, n. 1] 104f.; vii 3 does not require the scheme to have been reported earlier). Even so, AT does not avoid the major contradiction between i 16, which has Mordecai rewarded early on, and vii 4, which asserts that he had never been rewarded.


\(^{29}\)Though on p. 7 Torrey (above, n. 28) speaks of ii 1-viii 21 as deriving from a separate Aramaic text, on p. 16 he says that viii 18-21 is a "transitional patch" leading into an ending taken from the LXX.

\(^{30}\)Carey A. Moore (above, n. 2) 133-139; *idem*, "A Greek Witness to a Different Text of Esther," *ZAW* 79 (1967) 352f.
think it was. Moreover, he suggested, the AT was an independent translation of a Hebrew (or possibly Aramaic) original quite different from the LXX Vorlage. Clines bolstered the argument, emphasizing that the Septuagintal Additions A-F and the current ending of the AT (starting with viii 17) do not belong to the original AT. In view of the considerations that Clines raised, all arguments for the nature of the original AT must be based on non-Septuagintal passages alone.

The two theses argued in the present article – that the AT is composed of two levels and that the original AT was a translation from Hebrew – are supported by the same set of arguments, and so will be considered together. The existence of the "proto-AT" is not established by separate source-critical procedures. The proto-AT is simply what is left after the Septuagintal supplements are removed. By establishing that some passages but not others are derived from the LXX, we can isolate the redactional passages (those the redactor took from the LXX) from the original material (what is left after the redactional material is isolated). It is, of course, possible that the non-redactional material too underwent changes between its original state and the form preserved in the AT, so that the proto-AT is not necessarily the earliest layer. But source-analysis of the proto-AT is outside the scope of this study, which seeks only to reconstruct the two major components of the current AT. In any event, the passages that remain after the isolation of the redactional level constitute a consistent and complete Esther story, so there is no reason to think that the proto-AT that we can reconstruct by the removal of the redactional level of the AT differed significantly from the Esther tale the redactor started with.

Nine lines of evidence argue for the theses stated above. Items 1-6 sum up the argument put forward by Torrey, Moore, and Clines.

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31 Clines (above, n. 1) 85-92.

32 See also Herbert J. Cook, "The A text of the Greek versions of the book of Esther," ZAW 81 (1969) 369-376. Clines (above, n. 1) 85-92, also argues against the case for AT dependence on the LXX made by Tov (above, n. 28), as well as the position of Hanhart (above, n. 8, 81-84), that the AT is a reworking of the Greek Esther tradition with heavy dependence on the LXX.
1. Passages translated quite differently in the AT and the LXX that seem to presuppose the same or a very similar Vorlage

For example (vii 10 // 6:6b):

MT יואמר הנך בלבך שם הופך המחלך לешה ותקח ידיך מבני
LXX εἰπεν δὲ ἐν ἑαυτῷ ὁ Αμαν Τίνα θέλει ὁ βασιλεὺς δοξάσαι εἰ μὴ ἐμὲ;
AT καὶ ἑλογίσατο ὁ Αμαν λέγων ὦτι Τίνα βούλεται ὁ βασιλεὺς δοξάσαι εἰ μὴ ἐμὲ;

Moore observes that ἑλογίσατο and εἰπεν δὲ ἐν ἑαυτῷ clearly presuppose the same Hebrew, as do βούλεται and θέλει. Other examples: ii 10 // 1:10; iii 4 // 2:4; iv 1 // 3:1; viii 12b // 7:9b. Moore uses these passages as evidence that the AT is not a recension of the LXX, but rather an independent translation of a Vorlage that was often, but not always, the same as the MT.

Clines adds cases in which AT dependence on the LXX is contra-indicated, that is, where the two versions have different and unrelated translations even when apparently using the same Vorlage (iii 2 // 2:2; iii 4 // 2:4; iv 1 // 3:1; iv 8 // 3:8; v 1-2a // 4:1; v 2b // 4:2; viii 12b-13a // 7:9).

2. Hebraisms in the AT lacking in the LXX parallels

These show that the LXX was not intermediate between the AT and the Hebrew Vorlage. For example (ii 2a // 1:2a):

MT כָּשַׁב יָדְךָ (על כָּס מַלּוֹכַת)
LXX ὡς θρονίσθη ὁ βασιλεὺς Ἀρταξέρξης
AT ἐν τῷ καθησαυρεὶς Ασσυρίων ὁ βασιλεὺς (ἐπὶ τοῦ θρόνου τῆς βασιλείας αὐτοῦ)

Also 1:14 // ii 14 (see below); 1:21 // ii 21; 3:1 // iv 1.

33Moore (above, n. 30) 354.
34Ibid., 353f.
35Clines (above, n. 1) 87-89.
36Hanhart omits ὁ βασιλεὺς.
37Moore (above, n. 30) 355.
3. **Pluses in the AT**

By Moore's reckoning there are some 15 pluses in the AT lacking parallels in other versions, including all or parts of iv 1b; 3, 6, 7; vii 14b; viii 2, 4b, 5b-7, 9, 12, 13, 14, 36.38

4. **AT minuses**

There are numerous "omissions" or "abbreviations" of "repetitious elements," personal names, and numbers and dates (all or parts of 1:22; 2:6; 5:9; 9:23-25). These may represent a shorter Vorlage.39

5. **"Hebraisms" in AT variants**

Some AT variants are "slightly reminiscent of Hebraic style" and may reflect a different Hebrew Vorlage; for example, καὶ ἀγαθὸς ὁ λόγος ἐν καρδίᾳ τοῦ βασιλέως (ii 21; MT רועיש ובר בריעי המלך 1:21).40

6. **A near-absence of Septuagintalisms**

Clines argues this point forcefully.41 There are, however, several Septuagintal incursions42 that neither Moore nor Clines recognized, but once these are discounted his arguments are valid.

Arguments 3 and especially 4 are rather weak, since a redactor might both supplement his base text and remove passages from it. The redactor who reworked the proto-AT into its current state did just that – supplementing the proto-AT with passages from the LXX while omitting much of the material from ch. 9. The other arguments, however, establish at least a *prima facie* case for the theory that the proto-AT is independent of the LXX. Argument 5, as formulated, is not a strong claim, but once the independence of the proto-AT from the LXX is estab-

41 Clines (above, n. 1) 85-92.
42 ii 1a; ii 5b-8; iv 2; iv 9b-11-10a; v 4b-5; v 9b-10; vi 13-18; 21ab; vii 1.
lished, the LXX-AT differences, which exist in almost every verse and often concern matters of plot as well as wording, may be presumed to represent differences in proto-AT’s Vorlage, since they certainly do not derive from the MT.

In the following, I will adduce additional considerations supporting the theory, considerations that at the same time distance proto-AT’s Hebrew Vorlage from the MT:

7. The different frequency ranges of vocabulary correspondences (“matches”) between the LXX and two types of AT material.

Table I shows that certain passages (class 1) have at most a vague, incidental vocabulary overlap with the LXX, while others (class 2) have a strong vocabulary overlap. The LXX matches are concentrated in a few passages, not distributed more or less evenly through the book. This distribution pattern supports the theory that the material of the present text has two different origins.

To compare the texts I counted the vocabulary correspondences between them. (The count was manual, since the AT is not available for computers.) Since exact correspondence is not necessary to show dependency, I counted a variety of correspondences, here called "matches." The following are counted as matches: identical words, different grammatical forms of the same lexeme, prefix variants of the same stem, and words of different parts of speech from the same stem. These classes of "words" were included in the definition of "matches" because they are manifestly in the range of variations the redactor allowed himself in AT passages indisputably dependent on the LXX. Matches need not appear in the same position in the sentence in each version, but they must fill the same syntactical slot. A tighter definition of "matches" would not, however, effect the relative differences between the two texts. We would simply find a lower frequency of matches in both groups of passages; the dichotomy would remain.

The following examples show by italics what types of correspondences are counted as matches and how the statistics for Table I are calculated:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AT</th>
<th>LXX</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>vi 5 καὶ ἄρας τὸ πρόσωπον αὐτοῦ</td>
<td>D 7 καὶ ἄρας τὸ πρόσωπον αὐτοῦ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>πεπυρωμένον ἐν δόξῃ</td>
<td>πεπυρωμένον δόξῃ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ἐνέβλεψεν αὐτῇ ὡς ταῦτας</td>
<td>ἐν ἀκμῇ θυμῷ ἔβλεψεν</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ἐν ἀκμῇ θυμοῦ αὐτοῦ</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(16 AT words; 11 matches; frequency of matches: 0.69; 11 LXX words; fraction of LXX words represented in the AT: 1.00.)

vi 7-8a καὶ μετέβαλεν ὁ θεός τὸ πνεῦμα τοῦ βασιλέως καὶ μετέθηκε τὸν θυμὸν αὐτοῦ εἰς πραότητα, καὶ ἀγονιάσας ὁ βασιλέας κατεπήδησεν ἀπὸ τοῦ βρόντου αὐτοῦ καὶ ἀνέλαβεν αὐτὴν ἐπὶ τὰς ἀγκάλας αὐτοῦ, καὶ παρεκάλεσεν αὐτὴν D 8 καὶ μετέβαλεν ὁ θεός τὸ πνεῦμα τοῦ βασιλέως εἰς πραότητα, καὶ ἀγονιάσας ἀνεπήδησεν ἀπὸ τοῦ βρόντου αὐτοῦ καὶ ἀνέλαβεν αὐτὴν ἐπὶ τὰς ἀγκάλας αὐτοῦ, μέχρις οὗ κατέστη, καὶ παρεκάλει αὐτὴν λόγους εἰρηνικοῖς

(34 AT words; 27 matches; frequency of matches: 0.79; 32 LXX words; fraction of LXX words represented in the AT: 0.84.)

iv 8 λέγων Ἐστι λαὸς διεσπαρμένος ἐν πάσαις ταῖς βασιλείαις, λαὸς πολέμου καὶ ἀπειθής, ἐξαλλὰ νόμιμα ἔχον, τοῖς δὲ νομίμοις σοῦ, βασιλεῦ, οὗ προσέχουσι, γνωρίζομεν εἰ πάσι τοῖς ἔθνεσι πολλοὶ δόξης καὶ τὰ προστάγματά σου ἄθετοι πρὸς καθαίρεσιν τῆς δόξης σου 3:8 καὶ ἐλάλησεν πρὸς τὸν βασιλέα Ἀρταξέρξην λέγων Ὑπάρχει ἔθνος διεσπαρμένον ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν ἐν πάσῃ τῇ βασιλείᾳ σοι, οἱ δὲ νόμοι αὐτῶν ἐξαλλοὶ παρὰ πάντα τὰ ἔθνη, τῶν δὲ νόμων τοῦ βασιλέως παρακούσσιν, καὶ οὐ συμφέρει τῷ βασιλεῖ ἔκασθι αὐτοῦ.

(39 AT words; 11 matches; frequency of matches: 0.282; 40 LXX words; fraction of LXX words represented in the AT: 0.275.)

Individual correspondences are not evidence for origins. Almost all passages have some matches, because both the LXX and the AT tell essentially the same story. What is important are the overall patterns that give each passage its statistical profile.

Table I offers the following information, by column:
Column 1: the units. "A → B" etc. = the verses between Additions A and B, and so on.

Column 2: the number of matches found in each passage.

Column 3: the number of words in the AT of that passage.

Column 4: the frequency of matches in the AT (= col. 2 divided by col. 3).

Column 5: the number of words in the LXX of that passage.

Column 6: the percentage of LXX words represented in the AT (= col. 2 divided by col. 5). For the AT passages that are derived from the LXX, this column shows how much LXX material the redactor chose to use.

Column 7: the mean verse. In other words, if we list the percentages of matches in each verse in the AT passage, which percentage is the mean for that passage? This figure shows the "typical" degree of correspondence between the two versions in each passage. It thus counterbalances instances where a small part of a passage varies radically from the LXX, giving that passage a statistical profile that downplays the overall relation between the two versions in that passage.

D+ is included among the redactional sections because its dependence on the LXX seems undeniable. I first count the isolated verses among the non-Septuagintal material (Table I A, I B), so as to avoid circular reasoning: if we were to begin by counting the miscellaneous verses with a high percentage of Septuagintal matches as redactional, the other material would of course show little Septuagintal influence. Table I (A-B) shows that even when we count the verses that are probably Septuagintal among the "proto" sections, there is a sharp disjunction between the proto-AT and the redactional passages. The disjunction is more pronounced when we count the isolated redactional verses as well as the other redactional passages (Table I C).
The Alpha Text of the Greek Esther

TABLE I: AT'S USE OF LXX

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Column 1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Proto-AT (including isolated LXX incursions)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Class 1:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>matches</td>
<td>Number of AT wds</td>
<td>frequency of matches</td>
<td>Number of LXX wds</td>
<td>% of LXX represented in AT</td>
<td>mean vs.a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A→Bb</td>
<td>284</td>
<td>927</td>
<td>0.31</td>
<td>1381</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B→C</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>266</td>
<td>0.39</td>
<td>445</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+→E</td>
<td>216</td>
<td>446</td>
<td>0.48</td>
<td>1058</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E→Ending</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td>605</td>
<td>1,737</td>
<td>avg: 0.35</td>
<td>2,927</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Redactional sections</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Class 2:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>matches</td>
<td>Number of AT wds</td>
<td>frequency of matches</td>
<td>Number of LXX wds</td>
<td>% of LXX represented in AT</td>
<td>mean vs.*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>308</td>
<td>0.61</td>
<td>298</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td>.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>249</td>
<td>0.84</td>
<td>246</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>447</td>
<td>577</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>597</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>206</td>
<td>261</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>254</td>
<td>0.81</td>
<td>.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>0.69</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>0.84</td>
<td>.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>338</td>
<td>429</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>472</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Endingc</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>281</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>718</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td>199</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td>.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td>1,808</td>
<td>2,416</td>
<td>avg: 0.75</td>
<td>2,899</td>
<td>0.62</td>
<td>.93</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
C. *AT borrowings, if the isolated incursions* are regarded as reational:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of wd matches</th>
<th>Number of AT wds</th>
<th>frequency of matches</th>
<th>Number of LXX wds</th>
<th>% of LXX represented in AT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) Class 1:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>466</td>
<td>1,539</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td>2,927</td>
<td>0.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) Class 2:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,959</td>
<td>2,614</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>2,899</td>
<td>0.68</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[D\] = vi 13-18

\[a\] The fraction of LXX matches in the verse that stands at the mean of its unit in percentage of matches.

\[b\] "A→B" etc. = the verses between Additions A and B, and so on. LXX 8:13-14 is taken to correspond to E→AT-end.

\[c\] 8:15-10:3 in the LXX corresponds to the Ending.

\[d\] = ii 1a; ii 5bβ-8; iv 9b-11-10a; v 4b; v 9b-10; vi 21aβ; vii 1.

In class 1, only 35% of the words in the AT have matches in the LXX, and a mere 21% of the words in the LXX parallels appear in the AT. In class 2, 75% of the words of the AT have matches in the LXX, and 62% of the words in the corresponding LXX passages are represented in the AT. There is a gap, not a continuum, between the two classes. Also significant is the disparity between the two classes of text with regard to the means of frequency of matches-per-verse for each section. In class 1, the range of the mean match-frequency for each section ranges between 0% and 35%, the average mean for class 1 as a whole being 22%. In class 2, the range is between 57% and 97%, the average mean for the class as a whole being 93%. Such a disjunction cannot be explained by positing a single redactor reshaping the LXX with greater or less fidelity as he proceeded.

Moreover, in places where the redactor is working with indisputably Septuagintal material (i.e., Additions A-F), we do not see passages with low frequencies of matches, as would be the case if a single redactor were fluctuating between higher and lower levels of dependency. Moreover, the highly Septuagintal passages are not distributed more or less evenly throughout the book, as we would expect if the variations in match-frequency merely reflected fluctuations in a
redactor's style. Rather, they are densely clustered in eight places (the Additions A-F, D+, and the Ending).

Since almost all of the close AT-LXX resemblances are in passages that lack MT parallels altogether (i.e., the Additions), it seems best to explain the loose resemblances, which are found only in canonical passages, by positing a different type of relationship for those – an indirect one, namely that both the LXX and the proto-AT are derivatives of the same story, with the MT mediary between that story and the LXX.

These considerations show first that we must segregate the Additions, the Ending, and D+ (class 2 = redactional sections, transferred from the LXX), in order to understand the AT's relation to the LXX. Second, when this is done, there is little connecting the remaining text (class 1 = proto-AT) to the LXX.

The segmentation of the book for the statistical profile in Table I was according to natural divisions, based on marking off the deuterocanonical additions from the material between them. Lest, however, it be thought that the delineation of "passages" has influenced the patterns revealed, we should examine the density of Septuagintal matches, i.e., the degree to which matches cluster with other matches, and non-matched words with other non-matches – irrespective of the delineation of the book's subdivisions. The statistics of the density patterns of the Septuagintal matches clinches the argument that there are two fundamentally different types of material in the AT. We look at the distribution of (1) coordinate pairs, in which either a Septuagintal match (M) is followed by another match (MM), or a non-match (N) is followed by another non-match (NN), and (2) non-coordinate pairs (i.e., either MN or NM). The numbers of occurrences of each type are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coordinate pairs</th>
<th>MM</th>
<th>2102</th>
<th>NN</th>
<th>1953</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non-coordinate pairs</td>
<td>MN</td>
<td>502</td>
<td>NM</td>
<td>523</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Frequency of occurrence of coordinate pairs and non-coordinate pairs:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>first word</th>
<th>second word</th>
<th>frequency</th>
<th>number of observations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coordinate</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>80.71%</td>
<td>2604</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-coordinate</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>19.28%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coordinate</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>78.87%</td>
<td>2476</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-coordinate</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>21.12%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
It is immediately evident that coordinate pairs are much more frequent than non-coordinate pairs, showing that matches tend to co-occur and non-matches tend to co-occur.

The application of the logit model to these figures proves that these patterns are not random.\textsuperscript{43} In this model we use the second word in the pair as a dependent variable with two values (M and N), and the first words as an independent variable with two values (M and N). We ask whether we can predict the second variable given the first. Random distribution would yield 50% chance in each category and a Z-score of 0.

Application of the logit model produces a Z-score of 39.32. A Z-score greater than 3 means less than a 1% chance of the distribution occurring by chance. Thus the chance of the density of coordinate pairs in the AT being random is statistically insignificant. This is a strong indication that the AT was not produced by one person rewriting the LXX, but by two different acts of literary creativity, of two different types.

It might be suggested that the AT arose from two separate redactions of the LXX, the first (which supposedly produced the proto-AT from the LXX) very free, the second (which introduced the Septuagintal material) closely bound to its vorlage. But this supposition would undo the hypothesis that gave rise to it, for once we make this distinction, we can no longer use the second type of material in determining the origin of the first type, and little is left to connect that material with the LXX – scarcely more than miscellaneous words inevitably shared by two versions of the same basic story.

Thus I cannot agree with E. Tov\textsuperscript{44} that the canonical sections in the AT and the so-called Additions are one "organic unit," by which he means that the entire book goes back to a single recension of the LXX. It is true that the canonical sections in the AT contain several links to the Additions,\textsuperscript{45} but these are redactional, not integral to the AT (i.e., the proto-AT); for example, καὶ ἐγένετο μετὰ τῶν λόγων (ii 1), which is simply the redactor’s way of attaching Addition A to the start of the proto-AT. The reflexes of Addition C in ν 4b and Addition D in vi

\textsuperscript{43}I thank Mr. Xinshu Zhao of the Data and Computation Center of the University of Wisconsin for designing and calculating the logit model.

\textsuperscript{44}Tov (above, n. 23) 11-13.

\textsuperscript{45}Ibid.
1 that Tov mentions are in fact just transferred from LXX and say nothing about the affiliations of the non-redactional parts of the AT.\textsuperscript{46} There may indeed have been certain excisions from the (proto-)AT to avoid redundancies with the Additions.\textsuperscript{47} But these minuses can just as well be the work of R-AT (especially in 3:12), since the reductar frequently omitted redundancies (see especially his treatment of ch. 9). Or the "omitted" material may just as well have been absent from the proto-AT. This is probably the case in LXX 2:6; 2:21-23; 8:7-13.\textsuperscript{48}

8. MT-AT agreements against the LXX in the proto-AT sections – when these agreements are not Hexaplaric

Sentences where the AT is closer to the MT than to the LXX, yet not identical, are evidence that the AT is not a revision of the LXX. These agreements differ from those produced by the Hexaplaric or pre-Hexaplaric recension. (In the following, underlining marks words that appear in the MT and the AT but not in the LXX. Dots mark where the AT and the MT have a minus vis-à-vis the LXX.)

\textsuperscript{46}On the other hand, Esther's injunction to Mordecai, "And pray to God" (v 11), need not refer specifically to Mordecai's prayer (Add C), but may have stood alone.

\textsuperscript{47}Tov (above, n. 23) 12f.

\textsuperscript{48}Bickerman (above, n. 20) 108 adduces several omissions common to the AT and the LXX (as well as Josephus and the OL) as evidence that the Greek versions are not independent translations of differing Semitic originals, on the grounds that it is "unbelievable" that a later MT redactor would add such difficult passages. But in all these cases, the AT is lacking much more than just the clause that Bickerman notes, and the absence of a few words within the larger lack is hardly evidence of AT dependency on the LXX. These common omissions are:

(a) 6:8β (crown on horses head) – but all of 6:8 is lacking in the AT;
(b) 1:22 ("and speak in the language of his people") – but all of 1:22 is lacking in the AT;
(c) 2:19a (second gathering) – but all of 2:19-23 is lacking in the AT;
(d) 4:6 – but 4:5-7 is lacking in the AT;
(e) 8:10 (בכוסים...הוקוסים),
(f) and 8:14αα (difficult words) – but all of 8:8-14 is lacking in the AT.

Other words absent in the Versions may be later additions in the MT: 2:7 (Hadassah) (lacking in the AT, the LXX, Jos., the OL). Bickerman (\textit{ibid.}) considers דָּוִד in 3:8, "Ahashuerus" in 1:15, and "who waited upon him" in 2:2 to be such additions.
a. ii 2a // 1:2a: AT εν τῷ καθῆσθαι...ἐκ του θρόνου = MT אֲכָהָה מִלָּה thể. This clause, noted above (§ 2) as showing a Hebraism, is also a case where the AT agrees with the MT against the LXX.

b. ii 3 // 1:3: AT τοὺς ἀρχόντες essentially agrees with MT "his princes" against LXX τοῖς φίλοις. The AT diverges from the MT in several ways in this verse.

c. ii 13 // 1:13

MT And the king spoke to the **wise men who knew**
AT καὶ εἶπεν ὁ βασιλεὺς πᾶσι τοῖς σοφοῖς τοῖς εἰδόσι
LXX καὶ εἶπεν τοῖς φίλοις αὐτοῦ
MT the times, for thus was the word of the king before
AT
LXX Κατὰ τῶτα ἠλλήλησεν Ἀστιν, ποιήσατε οὖν περὶ τούτου
MT all who knew **law and justice**
AT νόμον καὶ κρίσιν
LXX νόμον καὶ κρίσιν

The LXX here, as often in canonical Esther, is free. The MT's plus, "the times...knew," may be an expansion by the MT author which was rephrased by the LXX translator, or it may be a post-MT expansion not present in the LXX Vorlage. The AT shares with the MT three items that are lacking in the LXX: "the king," "the wise men," and "who knew."  

49 "The king" does appear in some Hexaplaric MSS. Hexaplaric MSS also supply "knew," but as part of another phrase, "who knew the times."
The Alpha Text of the Greek Esther

AT  oí ἀρχοντες Περσῶν καὶ Μήδων
LXX  oí ἀρχοντες Περσῶν καὶ Μήδων

MT  who saw the face of the king,
AT  καὶ oí ὀρώντες τὸ πρόσωπον τοῦ βασιλέως
LXX  oί ἐγγύς τοῦ βασιλέως

MT  who sat first in the kingdom.
AT  καὶ oí καθῆμενοι ἐν τοῖς βασιλείοις
LXX  oὶ πρῶτοι παρακαθήμενοι τῷ βασιλεῖ

The italicized words are present in the MT but not represented in the free translation of the LXX; hence the AT could not have taken them from the LXX. On the other hand, the sequence of the passage in AT ii 13-14 differs from that of MT-LXX 1:15-16, with material corresponding to MT-LXX 1:15 appearing in AT ii 13. There are other AT divergences from the MT and the LXX in this passage, and no reviser tried to change them.\(^{50}\)

e. ii 16b/MT 1:17a.

MT  For the word of the queen will go forth to all the women ...
AT  καὶ εἰς πάντας τοὺς λαοὺς ἡ ἀδικία αὐτῆς ἔχθηλθεν...
LXX  καὶ γὰρ διηγήσατο αὐτοῖς τὰ ῥήματα τῆς βασιλίσσης καὶ ὡς ἀντείπεν...

The AT's ἔχθηλθεν renders consonantal ΧΧ as an aorist; the MT correctly points it as an imperfect, ΧΧ. The phrase "to all" likewise derives from a text common to the AT and the MT, not from the LXX. The MT probably changed "peoples" to "women" for greater specificity.

The fact that Aramaic פְּסָחִים would not occasion this ambiguity shows that the AT's Vorlage was in Hebrew.

f. iii 7 // 2:7 (clauses numbered in square brackets)

MT  And Mordecai was raising (אָסָּה) Hadassah,
AT  καὶ ἤν ἐκτρέφων πιστᾶς
LXX  καὶ ἤν τούτῳ παῖς θερετή

\(^{50}\)The word "seven" is a later addition in MT. It is missing in the Syriac as well as in LXX, AT, and OL. Its presence in Josephus may be an elaboration independent of MT.
that is Esther, the daughter of his uncle,

(7aβ) for she had no father or mother.

And the girl was lovely of form

and comely of appearance. (7bβ) And when her father and her

mother died, (7bγ) Mordecai took her to him

as a daughter.

The AT's ἐκτρέψων πιστῶς, "raised her faithfully," can only be an etymological rendering of קָשָׂ not derived from the LXX. This rendering, incidentally, shows that the AT's vorlage was in Hebrew not Aramaic, since the latter would use a form of בָּרָר, not קָשָׂ, for "raising."

The AT was not influenced by the LXX's notion that Mordecai raised Esther to be his wife, nor by its importation of the name of Esther's father from 9:29, nor by its different ordering of the clauses (indicated above by numbers in square brackets), nor by the MT pluses in vv. 7aβ and 7bβ. The AT’s καὶ ἡραία τῇ δύσει (// MT יָהָר יְבָשָׂ), missing in the LXX, are supplied in Hexaplaric MSS, but in a different order (καὶ ἡραίον τῇ δύσει σφόδρα).

g. iii 9b // 2:16

And Esther was taken
The Alpha Text of the Greek Esther

AT ὃς δὲ εἰσήχθη Ἑσσηρ
LXX καὶ εἰσῆλθεν Ἑσσηρ

The AT's "was taken" derives from Hebrew הָלַךְ, not from the LXX's "entered." (This equivalence does not result from a systematic attempt to adjust the AT to the MT, since in iii 8 AT renders הָלַךְ by ἔληφθη.) But the AT diverges from the MT in omitting the king's name and everything after "the king." Also the AT goes its own way in the sequence of sentences in iii 6-9.

h. iii 17b // 2:17b

MT and she received grace and kindness before him
AT καὶ εὐρε ἡράν καὶ ἐλεον κατὰ πρόσωπον αὐτοῦ
LXX καὶ εὔρεν ἡράν

MT more than all the virgins,
AT
LXX παρὰ πάσας τὰς παρθένους,

MT and he put the royal crown
AT καὶ ἐπέθηκε τὸ διάδημα τῆς βασιλείας
LXX καὶ ἐπέθηκεν αὐτῇ τὸ διάδημα τὸ γυναικεῖον.

MT on her head and made her queen in place of Vashti.
AT ἐπὶ τὴν κεφαλὴν αὐτῆς.
LXX

The AT agrees with the MT in including "and kindness" (for τὸν), "before him," "on her head," and "royal." (The Hexaplaric form of the first two missing items is καὶ ἐλεον ἐνώπιον αὐτοῦ.) On the other hand, the AT agrees with the LXX against the MT in omitting the last clause. There are a few such cases. Either the phrase is a later plus in the MT or the original MT redactor added a clause that turned out to be among the material omitted by the LXX.

i. iv 1 // 3:1

MT After these things
AT καὶ ἐγένετο μετὰ τῶν λόγων τοῦτους
LXX μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα

MT the king Xerxes exalted
AT
LXX

Haman son of Hammedatha
The AT’s “placed his seat above” must represent יֹּלֶדֶת rather than יָאַב מַךְ, and cannot derive from the LXX. On the other hand, the LXX = the AT in תַּנְו פִּילָוָאָנ αὐτοῦ. פילוס is one of the LXX’s characteristic terms, used to render שֵּׁפֶך (1:3 [AT ἀρχουσθείς]; 2:18 [AT lacking]; 3:1 [AT פִּילוּוֹנ]), מִשְׁמַר (1:13 [AT σεφοίς]; 6:13b [AT σφοι]), מִשְׁפַּר (5:10 [AT פִּילוּוֹנָא; 6:13a [AT lacks]), and יָרָם (9:22 [AT lacks]). The AT shows no consistent attempt to follow the LXX in its treatment of these words. Its presence in iv 1b is probably an accidental agreement.

The AT’s on the other hand, does show LXX influence. Since by itself it cannot testify to dependency of the whole verse on the LXX, it can best be explained as a redactional incursion from the LXX, either by the main AT redactor or by a later copyist. In vi 21b // 5:11b too, R-AT has taken the spelling of the name of Haman’s wife from the LXX (יוֹסְפָאָאָן).

j. iv 5b // 3:6: The AT’s εξήτει represents מִשְׁפַּר more precisely than does the LXX’s εβουλεύσατο.51

k. iv 10 // 3:10a: The AT’s ἀπὸ τῆς χειρος αὐτοῦ = the MT’s לְעָל, absent in the LXX. AT iv 10 otherwise differs considerably from the MT – in its placement in the story as well as in its wording.

51 MS 392 has εξήτει τον Μαρδοκαίον ἄνελεῖν, but according to Hanhart (ad loc.) this is taken from the AT (there is much cross-influence in this MS).
9. The language of the proto-AT

Linguistic considerations show that the proto-AT is a translation from a Hebrew Vorlage, not a revision of the LXX.

Raymond Martin’s studies in the syntax of Greek texts provide a method of determining whether a text was originally composed in Greek or was translated from a Semitic language (Hebrew or Aramaic). Examining various texts whose origin is known, Martin looked at the distribution of seventeen syntactical features and found a sharp difference in the patterns of their use in "original-Greek" and "translation-Greek" texts.

An example of such a feature is the use of καί to introduce main clauses. This syntagm can, of course, occur in texts originally composed in Greek. What is decisive is the ratio of occurrences between καί + main clause and the particle δέ. Martin found that in texts translated from Semitic, that ratio is typically equal to or greater than 2.1 to 1. It is not the syntagm καί + main clause that constitutes the translation-Greek trait, but rather the appearance of the syntagm in the specified frequency range. The 17 syntagms counted are listed in the first column of Table I.

A translation-Greek "trait" refers not to a specific occurrence of a syntactic feature (e.g., διά + genitive) in a text, but to a case where a syntagm occurs in the frequency-range characteristic of translated texts (as shown in Table II), and conversely for original-Greek "traits." (I have chosen the term "trait" for what Martin, rather ambiguously, calls "frequencies.")

Not every translated text need have all the translation-Greek traits. What is decisive is the over-all profile of the text: how many translation-Greek traits it has in comparison to original-Greek traits. To arrive at this profile one looks at the net number of translation-Greek or original-Greek traits; this is calculated by subtracting the smaller number from the larger. 1 Kgs 17, for example, has ten translation-Greek traits and four original-Greek traits, yielding a net of six translation-Greek traits, which accords with what we know of the origin of that text. (There are also three syntagms that occur too infrequently to contribute to the profile and are therefore left out of the count.)

Martin found that texts translated from Hebrew or Aramaic always had at least four more translation-Greek traits than original-Greek ones, whereas texts composed in Greek always had a net plus of at least 15 original-Greek traits. Moreover, no original-Greek texts had any traits characteristic of translation Greek,\textsuperscript{53} while translated texts had at least nine traits characteristic of translation Greek.

The results of Martin's methods are impressive, especially for selections longer than 50 lines, and leave little doubt that texts originally composed in Greek show clear differences from translated texts. Application of his criteria to a selection of 57 lines from the proto-AT produces the following results:

### TABLE II: CHARACTERISTICS OF TRANSLATION-GREEK IN THE PROTO-AT

| col. I lists the syntactic features and their frequencies in translation-Greek, according to Martin.\textsuperscript{54} |
|---|---|---|
| Col. II gives the frequencies of these features in a 118-line selection from the proto-AT (ii 11-13, 16-21; vii 13-21, 33-39).\textsuperscript{55} |
| Col. III gives the frequencies in a 80-line selection from LXX-Esther (1:11-20; 6:11-8:4).\textsuperscript{56} |

An asterisk marks frequencies that fall in the range characteristic of translation-Greek.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>col. I</th>
<th>col. II proto-AT</th>
<th>col. III LXX-Est</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. δυδ + gen. .06-.01 as freq. as ἐν\textsuperscript{57}</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>1.16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{53} Martin (above, n. 52) 40-42. When an original-Greek text had less than 17 original-Greek frequencies, that was only because one or two syntagms did not occur at all in that text and were not taken into account.

\textsuperscript{54} Above, n. 52, passim.

\textsuperscript{55} These passages are largely free of LXX incursions, except perhaps for minor, statistically insignificant ones. Major transfers from the LXX would presumably introduce translation-Greek features not belonging to the original AT.

\textsuperscript{56} These verses generally parallel part of the proto-AT selection, but the validity of the comparison does not depend on the similarity of the versions, since entirely unrelated texts can be compared by Martin's criteria.

\textsuperscript{57} ἐν occurs five times in the sample of AT studied, six times in LXX.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>col. I</th>
<th>col. II proto-AT</th>
<th>col. III LXX-Est</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>διά + all cases</td>
<td>.18- .01 as freq. as ἐν(^{58})</td>
<td>.14 *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>εἰς</td>
<td>.49- .01 as freq. as ἐν</td>
<td>.21 *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>κατά + acc.</td>
<td>.18- .01 as freq. as ἐν</td>
<td>.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>κατά + all cases</td>
<td>.19- .01 as freq. as ἐν</td>
<td>.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>περί + all cases</td>
<td>.27- .01 as freq. as ἐν</td>
<td>.21 *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>πρὸς + dative</td>
<td>.024- .01 as freq. as ἐν</td>
<td>.07 *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>ἑω + gen.(^{59})</td>
<td>.07- .01 as freq. as ἐν</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>καὶ in main clauses ≥ 2.1 times as frequent as all occurrences of ἐσ</td>
<td>3.86 *</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>≤ .05 of articles separated from their substv.</td>
<td>.006 *</td>
<td>.016 *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>≥ 22 dependent genitives following the word they qualify for each such gen. preceding the word qualified</td>
<td>65 *</td>
<td>23 *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>≤ 9 lines of Gk for each dependent gen. personal pron.</td>
<td>2.95 *</td>
<td>4.7 *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>≤ 77 lines for each gen. personal pron. dependent on anarthrous substantive</td>
<td>29.5 *</td>
<td>0 *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>≤ 35% attrib. adjs. preceding the word they qualify for each attrib. adj. following the word qualified</td>
<td>.50</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>≥ 10.1 text lines for each attrib. adj.</td>
<td>19.6 *</td>
<td>16 *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>≥ 6 lines for each adverbial part.</td>
<td>10.72 *</td>
<td>6.6 *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>≤ 2atives not used as object of ἐν(^{60}) for each occurrence of ἐν</td>
<td>2 *</td>
<td>5 *</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{58}\)ἐν occurs five times in the sample of AT studied, six times in LXX.

\(^{59}\)According to Martin (above, n. 52) 5, n. 3, the absence of a preposition cannot be used as a criterion for identifying the type of Greek in a particular text.

\(^{60}\)Excluding objects of λέγειν, εἰπεῖν, and διδόναι (Martin [above, n. 52] 36).
These statistics show conclusively that the proto-AT is a translation from a Semitic language, in this case Hebrew. The Semitic character of the proto-AT is within the range of the translated texts Martin analyzed.

Now there is no dispute that the proto-AT is a translation at some remove; somewhere behind its version of the Esther story obviously lay a Semitic text. The question is whether the proto-AT is a translation or a recension of a translation, in particular, a recension of the LXX. While the above statistics cannot settle the issue, they provide strong evidence that the proto-AT as we have it is close to the original translation.

It is doubtful that a recensor of a Greek text would or could vary the content of that text extensively while maintaining a strongly “Semitic” character. A recension that moved as far from its base text as the proto-AT is from the LXX would certainly have taken on a greater original-Greek appearance. Josephus, who retells biblical stories with a fair degree of faithfulness to the content of his source (i.e., the Septuagint), produces a Greek style all of whose features are in the frequency ranges for original-Greek. We may say, then, that the proto-AT is far less of a reworking of a Greek Vorlage than is Josephus, at least with regard to style.

The above statistics prove that the proto-AT is not a revision of the LXX. First of all, most of the particular occurrences of syntagms whose frequency-ratios produce the pronounced translation-Greek character of the proto-AT sample are

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60 AT’s Vorlage was Hebrew not Aramaic; see above §§8 e, f.

61 Martin’s statistics are based on selections from Contra Apionem and Antiquities, not Wars, which was originally written in Aramaic (Wars 1 i 3).
absent from the LXX. Surely no redactor would or could have introduced these traits. Even one who wished to give his work a Hebraic “tone” would not realize that these features, though all acceptable Greek on their own, become characteristics of translation-Greek when they appear in certain ratios with other syntactical features.

Second, the application of Martin’s methodology to the Greek Esther texts shows the proto-AT to have a radically more pronounced translational character than LXX-Esther. This difference can hardly have been produced by redaction of the LXX. Looking at net translation-Greek traits, the simplest index of origin, we find a net figure of six for the proto-AT, which is below the 12.4 average for the 10 translated texts Martin studied but well within their range of four to 14 net translation traits. LXX-Esther, on the other hand, has four more original-Greek traits than translation-Greek traits! This finding does not undermine Martin’s methodology, since this figure is well below the net count of 15-17 original-Greek traits that Martin found in the original-Greek texts he studied. Moreover, LXX-Esther does have six translation-Greek traits, whereas none of the original-Greek texts had any of the traits characteristic of translated texts.

In sum, it is hardly conceivable that a redaction of the LXX produced the proto-AT. While a translator may achieve a natural Greek style and thus not conform to the usual ranges for translations, it would have been highly unlikely, if not impossible, for an author writing in Greek to use the translational style as densely as the proto-AT does. Moreover, it is very unlikely that a recension of a translation of the MT that went as far from its base text as the proto-AT is from the MT would maintain such a highly translational character. The proto-AT

62 For example, in AT viii 2-3 the italicized words are elements in syntags that appear with frequencies characteristic of translation Greek: (2) καὶ ἤγονισεν Ἑσθὴρ ἐν τῷ ἀπαγόλειν, ὡς ἡ ἀντίθεσις ἐν ὑθράλμοις αὐτῆς, καὶ ὁ θεὸς ἐθνομακάρτις αὐτῆς ἥρατο ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ ἑαυτὸς ἐπικαλείθησαι αὐτῷ. (3) καὶ εἶπεν Ἑσθὴρ Εἰ ἤμοι ἑαυτῶν, καὶ ἀναστὰ τῇ κρίσει ἐν καρδίᾳ αὐτῶν, δοθήτω ὁ λαὸς μου τῷ αἰτήματι μου καὶ τὸ ἱδνος τῆς ψυχῆς μου. V. 2 has no parallel in the LXX. V. 3 in the LXX reads (with the same words underlined): καὶ ἀποκρίθησα εἶπεν Εἰ ἤμοι χάριν ἐνόσιον τῷ βασιλέως, δοθήτω με τῇ ψυχῇ τῷ αἰτήματι μου καὶ ὁ λαὸς μου τῷ ἀξιόματι μου. Thus in these two verses, 9 of the 13 words that will enter into the ratios that will characterize the AT as translation-Greek are present in the LXX.

63 Gen 1-4; 6; 39; 1 Sam 3; 4; 22; 1 Kgs 17; 2 Kgs 13; Daniel LXX and Theodotion (both the Hebrew and Aramaic portions); Ezra (Hebrew and Aramaic portions).
must be fairly close to its Hebrew Vorlage, which was quite different from the MT.

The Hebrew provenience of the proto-AT shows that it was a Jewish work.\textsuperscript{64} As such, it must have been composed prior to MT-Esther, or at least prior to that version's widespread acceptance as authoritative. It is not a recension or even a midrashic reworking of MT-Esther: It is too distant from the MT, it scarcely uses wording that might be thought a quotation of the MT, and it adds no moralistic bias and very little religious content. Furthermore, it omits themes that would be important to a Jewish redactor, above all the establishment of Purim and the forms of its observance.

The MT and the proto-AT are too similar to be construed as two unrelated compositions, yet the proto-AT does not descend from the MT. If it is agreed that the proto-AT is not a recension of the MT, it must either be ancestral to the MT or descend from a common ancestor. Just what their relationship is is far more difficult to establish. Clines largely treats the proto-AT as a direct ancestor of the MT, but greater caution is required, since much could have changed in the proto-AT subsequent to the stage when its line diverged from the MT's. It is safer to consider the proto-AT an ancient collateral relative of the MT.

\textsuperscript{64}At any rate, it is devoid of Christology. This is true of the redactional layers as well, where the redactor's ideology does reveal itself.